

[Catherine and Will Jones]

Chatham County

September 14, 1938

W. O. F.

CATHERINE AND WILL JONES

The Jones family lives a hundred yards from the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church and about six miles south-west of Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The house, facing the State road, has a sandy yard shaded by large oaks. Its weatherboarded exterior has never been painted, and the inside is ceiled in rough plaster. The seven rooms seem adequate for the family, though the living room contained a bed — a common feature of many fairly good country homes.

Mrs. Jones told me that her husband was forty-four four years old and I judged her to be about the same age. They have six children, ranging in age from seventeen years to fourteen months. Both Mr. and Mrs. Jones lived in Raleigh at the time of their marriage and for a few years afterwards. For a while before he married, Mr. Jones was a mechanic in a factory. For a few years after marriage he was a meat-cutter. On account of ill health, he was advised by a physician to move to the farm. He receives an annual pension of \$600 as a wounded veteran of the World War. As a preparation for the new life, he was given 22 months of vocational training in agriculture at the North Carolina State College.

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Seven years ago they began renting the farm on which they are still living. They have a comfortable farm house and two hundred acres of land for which they pay an annual cash rental of \$75.00. They believe that this rental is a more profitable arrangement than buying

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a farm. They have maintained a car for the past seven years but since the early part of the summer of this year they have not used it and will probably do without a car in the future.

Mr. Jones remained in the public schools through the tenth grade. Mrs. Jones stopped at the end of the seventh grade in order to help her parents. Five of their children attend a consolidated school in Chatham County. The parents are ambitious for their children to complete the high school course, and the seventeen year old boy will be sent to State college if he does well in his last year in high school.

The Jones family believes that poor families who are industrious and ambitious can do as well in the country as in the city. They think their landlord is fair towards them and that the community is a good place in which to bring up children. They subscribe to the Durham Morning Herald, the Chapel Hill Weekly, The Ladies Home Journal and four farm periodicals.

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Both husband and wife vote, believing the franchise to be a duty as well as a privilege. They sense fairly well the change in political life. They wish the government to continue to act as umpire between the farmers and hope the allotments of cotton and tobacco lands will continue. They vote the straight Democratic ticket.

The family are active workers in the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church. They attend each week the Sunday School, B.Y.P.U. and Wednesday night prayer-meeting and during each month are present at the three services conducted by the pastor. They believe that religion safeguards morals.

There has been very little illness in the Jones family. The father's health has greatly improved since he came to the farm. One daughter recently had her appendix removed; this is the only medical bill of any consequence the family has had.

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So cotton is raised on the farm, but four and a half acres of tobacco were planted this year. The rest of the cleared land is in corn, hay, peas, and soy-beans. The garden to adequate to the needs of the family, and usually from 200 to 300 quarts of vegetables and fruits are canned during the summer. Most of the food for the hogs is raised on the place and very little meat is bought. The corn grown upon the place furnishes all the meal needed, but no wheat is raised. Flour is about the only food purchased which might be raised on the farm. Most of the butter they make is used by the family; though some of it is sold at the stores. The same is true of eggs.

This family has read the government bulletins on balanced diet for animals and people. Meat takes a lower place in the family rations than vegetables and fruits. The good health of the parents and children can undoubtedly be attributed in large part to a balanced diet.

I asked how the family's leisure time was spent. Mrs. Jones said that a large family on the farm does not have much leisure. There is no "loafing." The father and the older boys spend some time in hunting and fishing. The church is the social center for the young people. Sundry morning, Sundry evening, and Wednesday evening are spent at the church. The young people meet separately morning and evening, on Sundays. Occasionally the B.Y.P.U. gives a "social." The young people of the community occasionally "get up a carfull" and go to Chapel Hill or Durham to the movies. Baseball and football games at Farrington and Chapel Hill are also attended. A big outing to given the high school class in agriculture every summer, a trip to the mountains or seacoast, with transportation furnished by the county. Until three years ago the community had a baseball team which played every Saturday during the spring and summer, but the custom has lapsed.

This family is not typical of any class of farm families, as their income from the government of \$600 a year makes them independent of the speculative cash crop farming. The

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tobacco they raise can be held for a good market, and a larger proportion of effort can be put in food and feed crops than is usually possible.